

Nature in the City Subcommittee  
Greensboro Community Sustainability Committee  
Project Proposals

Members: Joel Landau, Marlene Sanford, Valerie Vickers, Michael Roberto, Phillip Gillespie, Greg Meyerson, Jeanne Aller, Laurel Sanders

Guests: Karen Neill (Guilford County Cooperative Extension Service), Elaine Stover (Greenschemes and Tree Commission), Kevin Redding (Piedmont Land Conservancy)

We request that City Council consider the following project proposal priorities:

1. Urban Agriculture
  - A. Identify parcels of city-owned land that may be used for community gardens and training citizens in community gardening. North Carolina A & T University is writing a grant for initial funding under the leadership of Dr. Terrence Thomas and an Advisory Board that includes Greensboro Parks and Recreation, NC Agricultural Extension Service, community groups and representatives from NC A & T. Objectives include using participatory techniques to create partnerships for designing and establishing a sustainable community-based food system that is healthy, sustainable, and provides emerging economic opportunities within the community.
  - B. Create an urban demonstration garden in the downtown area that showcases sustainable techniques such as sheet-mulching, composting, rainwater catchment, herb spirals, and multi-level plantings. Funding from grants; work done by volunteers from community or universities.
2. Green Corridors and Wild Spaces
  - A. Work in concert with Piedmont Land Conservancy and Greensboro Beautiful to include more wild areas in park and greenway design, in addition to cultivated areas. Research shows that quality of life, health, and educational benefits occur when children and adults have access to the natural world. Approaches such as the naturalization of stream banks could be expanded to more public lands.
3. Urban Sustainability Projects with micro-loans and/or a low interest revolving loan fund.
4. Education on Carbon Footprint Reduction
  - A. Create teaching “moments” that focus on practices that reduce our carbon footprint as individuals and as a community
  - B. Expand public, private partnerships with other Greensboro-based organizations and institutions to foster ecologically sustainable practices, to enhance the beauty, and to reduce our carbon footprint.

Addendum: All Project Ideas Submitted

1. Urban Agriculture: Identify parcels of land from City for NC A & T to train citizens to do community gardens (Funding: NC A & T grant) (check water access costs)
2. Water Conservation: Use block grants for household water conservation (neighborhood associations); water bill incentives for conservation, rain barrels, etc
3. Reduce Energy Use/Lawn Mowing: plant multi-species eco-lawn seeds that need mowing monthly rather than weekly (pilot project on city property)
4. Reduce Energy Use/New Guidelines for Landscaping around Retention Ponds: to improve water quality, wildlife habitat, sediment control, etc (possible school project or institution project?)
5. Tree diversity: What kinds of trees are best for carbon removal? Classify trees as an asset? Create a community nursery. Teach tree propagation.
6. Education--Teaching moment for City Council and Public: educating about macro-issues to improve receptivity to specifics

7. Creation and/or utilization of wild places in the City: Research shows that quality of life, health, and educational achievement improves when children and adults have access to the natural world
8. Demonstration Garden at City Hall
9. Community Food Assessment/Farm to cafeteria food projects
10. City Seed Bank: repository of non-hybrid seeds
11. Urban Sustainability Projects: micro-loans or evolving loan fund, low interest
12. Revenue Bond for Sustainable Projects; repay from savings (no out-of-pocket expense)
13. Partnership Development: Build bridges with Greensboro Beautiful, Agriculture Extension, colleges and universities, public libraries, Scouts, etc. to foster stewardship, to enhance the beauty, and to reduce the City carbon footprint
14. Look at land use practices and zoning to include local food production and agriculture belts as a part of development